

# ADVISORY COUNCIL ON TIDAL FINFISHERIES



## MINUTES OF July 24, 2018



Dover Public Library, 35 E. Loockerman St, Dover, DE 19901  
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### ADVISORY COUNCIL

Dewayne Fox, Ph.D., Chair (*Absent*)  
Bernie Pankowski  
Brian Hoffecker  
James "Jay" Little  
Marvin Kahl, Jr.  
P. "Wes" Townsend  
Joseph Smith

### DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE

Captain Nick Couch  
John Clark  
Rebecca Hoover  
Stewart Michels  
David Saveikis, Director

### PUBLIC

9 Visitors

#### **Agenda Item 1. Welcome**

**Vice-Chairman P. "Wes" Townsend** called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and welcomed everyone.

#### **Agenda Item 2. Approval of April 18, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

A motion to accept the April meeting minutes was approved without objection.

**Agenda Item 3. Reallocating Delaware's Commercial Striped Bass Quota between the Gill Net and Hook and Line Fisheries to Prevent Future Overages – John Clark, Fisheries Administrator**, summarized the history of Delaware's Striped Bass commercial quota allocation, explained why the current allocation led to a quota overage in 2018 and proposed options for changing the quota allocation to prevent future overages. The TFFAC then unanimously approved a motion recommending that the Division allocate 95% of the quota to the gill net fishery and 5% of the quota to the hook and line fishery in 2019. The TFFAC also recommended a control date of Feb 1<sup>st</sup> of each year for the Division to receive Striped Bass commercial hook and line fishery quota applications. The Division will need to initiate a regulation change through the Administrative Procedures Act process.

Council member Brian Hoffecker had asked the Division to reconsider the prohibition on the use of anchor nets in the Delaware River during the spring Striped Bass gill net season. **Captain Nicholas Couch** of Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police explained why the Division still considers the prohibition necessary for boating safety. The issue was deferred to a future TFFAC meeting.

**Agenda Item 4. Regulatory Update – Stewart Michels, Fisheries Program Manager**, stated that there will be a public hearing on July 26, 2018 for the proposed regulation changes for Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass. The Summer Flounder emergency order that reduced the minimum size limit to 16.5 inches was extended an extra 60 days. The draft Tautog regulation, which makes changes necessary to comply with Amendment 1 to the Tautog Fisheries Management Plan (FMP), will be the subject of a public hearing on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. A Start Action Notice is being drafted

for Cobia to adopt *de minimis* measures or measures consistent with our nearest non- *de minimis*. Neighbor (VA).

**Agenda Item 5. Mid Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (MAFMC) June 2018 Meeting Summary – Stewart Michels, Fisheries Program Manager**, stated that the MAFMC is working on the Atlantic and Chub Mackerel FMPs. MAFMC has scheduled a public hearing for September 13, 2018 on the draft Summer Flounder Amendment, which addresses goals, objectives and commercial issues. NOAA Fisheries requested that Delaware implement rebuilding measures for the Dusky Shark stock, which include requiring a non-offset, corrodible circle hooks to minimize hooking mortality. The TFFAC approved a motion recommending that the Division promulgate regulations consistent with federal Dusky Shark regulations.

**Agenda Item 6. Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Update – John Clark, Fisheries Administrator**, said that the attendees at Delaware's public hearing on Draft Addendum V to the American Eel FMP favored increasing the coast-wide harvest cap. The changes made to Addendum XXX to the Black Sea Bass FMP at the Spring Meeting did not affect Delaware's 2018 Black Sea Bass regulation. The benchmark Striped Bass stock assessment should be completed by February 2019.

**Agenda Item 7. Boat Ramp Maintenance – John Clark, Fisheries Administrator**, The Collins Beach boat ramp was cleared of mud and surveyed for possible dredging. The Augustine boat ramp is scheduled for dredging every two years and will be dredged in 2019. The mud has been cleared from the Newport boat ramp.

**Agenda Item 8. Director's Update – David Saveikis, Fish and Wildlife Division Director**, updated the TFFAC on the passage of SB 158 that allows the landing in Delaware of fish caught in federal waters with gear legal in federal waters and on SB 220 that provides for the Division of Motor Vehicles to issue two recreational fishing license plates (one saltwater fishing-themed, the other freshwater fishing-themed)

with a portion of the revenue from the sale of such plates going to the Division to enhance recreational fishing. He also discussed Little Creek boat ramp construction, due for completion in October, Phillips Landing boat ramp reconstruction, which will begin in late fall, and the reconstruction of the Millsboro Pond boat ramp reconstruction and parking lot expansion scheduled for 2019.

**Suggested Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

1. Further discussion of anchor netting for Striped Bass north of Liston Point.
2. TFFAC Annual Report.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM  
Respectfully Submitted by

*Rebecca Hoover*

Rebecca Hoover  
Recording Secretary